



NEWS RELEASE

COUNCILMEMBER MARTI EMERALD

Seventh District

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For Immediate Release

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COUNCILMEMBER EMERALD URGES REPEAL OF “DON’T ASK DON’T TELL”

With Congress poised to take pivotal votes this weekend on Defense funding bills, City Councilmember Marti Emerald is urging repeal of the military’s policy of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”, which bans openly gay and lesbian Americans from serving in the Armed Forces. This policy has resulted in the discharge of hundreds of men and women, already in the military, and has long been opposed by civil rights groups.

The U.S. House and Senate versions of the National Defense Authorization Act do not currently repeal “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell”. Councilmember Emerald wants both bills amended.

“It’s time to end this discriminatory law and let all Americans serve this country and achieve their great potential”, said Emerald. The San Diego City Council and other elected officials in California have condemned this law, calling it inequitable and counterproductive.

The National Defense Authorization Act has been approved by the House Armed Services Committee, but does not include language repealing “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell.” Councilmember Emerald has written to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) asking her to amend the bill when it reaches the House floor for consideration. A vote could come as early as this weekend.

The Senate Armed Services Committee is expected to take up its version of the Defense Authorization bill next week. Councilmember Emerald has written letters to key Committee members who are still reportedly undecided, urging them to reject “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell”: Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Indiana; Sen. Robert Byrd, D-West Virginia; Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Florida.

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